

# CONVERSION

EXEMPLIFIED;

118 In the Instance of a  
Gracious Gentlewoman  
Now in Glory.

Written from her own mouth and  
Appointment, by her dearest  
Friend: And Published, in pur-  
suance of her desires, for com-  
mon benefit, but especially for  
her near Relations in the flesh.



London, Printed in the Year, 1669.

b  
t  
8  
b  
in  
M  
tr  
u  
ait  
st

Gen. Rec. 2 Aug 35 Cuttilla



MAN'S AN  
EPISTLE  
TO THE<sup>en</sup>  
READER. *To the*

READER,

*Gen. Rev. 2 Aug 35 Cuttelle*  
**T**He following History contains  
a Narrative of the Work of  
Conversion upon a Gentle-  
woman, who now enjoys the  
harvest of that seed-time, in Glory. At  
the day of Judgment she will come a-  
gain bringing her sheaves with her,  
having (as you may here read) sown  
in tears. The unusual way of her tran-  
slation out of the power of Satan into  
the Kingdom of Christ, imprest so deep  
upon her heart so oft as she reflected on  
it, as (though her conscience was  
sprinkled with the blood of the Cove-

## An Epistle

nant, yet) she could not quietly think on dying, till she had caused as much as (in so languishing an estate as she was in) she could call to mind, to be written down, that by the publishing of it, God might be glorified, and souls by her example receive some guidance, comfort and establishment. The greatest discouragement she herein met with, was from a secret stirring of vain ostentation, which she was so great an enemy to, as she sometime thought it were better not to let these things be known, than to encline to seek her own name in them. But she then considered, that if a Christian should omit service, till he be perfectly free from sinful self-seeking, no duty should be done on this side Heaven. Therefore she proceeded in her purpose, only desiring that her name should not be printed with it. It would fill a bigger book, than this (which she directed to be written) to give the Grace of Christ in her its full due: But my design is brevity; to  
which



## to the Reader.

which yet I am not under so strict an Obligation, as to make me wholly silent, while I have a duty to discharge to a Saint, whose Faith, though she be dead, speaketh so exceeding loud. Permit me then to write her Character truly, and shortly.

In freedom from guile she was, as if she had been twin-sister to Nathaniel, and sole-daughter and heretrix to plain-hearted Jacob. Love to Christ and his Members burnt so hot in her (in this frigid age wherein all seek their own) as it drank up her radical moisture in a degree to the shortning of her life. She did bear the suffering of enemies very uneasily, but the wants of friends and relations (especially if they were in Christ) mingled her pleasant things with gall and wormwood. Except in a very few instances, I never knew such a Wife, such a Child, such a Sister, such a Mother-in-law, such a Friend for reality and ardency of love. 'Tis prodigious

## An Epistle

to this luke-warm age to lose such a pattern in the prime of her dayes. Such was her self denial, humility, and constant sence of sin, as seldom did any sound come from her lips, in which she did not complain of, and condemn her self: and in private it was her constant practice. Never such a sinner pardoned and saved, was her daily cry.

In the description of natural and moral Excellencies, I have seen Volumes written of Subjects much inferior; I shall satisfie my self in saying only, That in her I have seen an end of those Perfections.

The heart and bowels are of great use in Nature, being both architectonical parts, and the seat of affections. They were in her of so tender a composition, as the fall of her earthly tabernacle at them commenced; being deeply wounded at the calamities of Sufferers, who sometimes on one side, sometimes on another, this divided Kingdom hath exposed

## to the Reader.

exposed to that condition. Without repentance I am assured God will have an account of her blood of many instruments of cruelty, who little think they had any hand in it: sins of ignorance being in their nature no more venial than those against knowledge, though they are less heinous.

Her eyes were wholly deprived of their beloved rest from Friday night till Tuesday afternoon, when death closed them, so far as those about her could discern. Much about two compleat dayes and nights she wrestled under more immediate gripes of death: and it was, that what God had in so great plenty given her, might have its due exercise for his glory. It was indeed a time of sharp tryal, but not the least prevailing against her faith and patience. Her saying was, My pain is great, but God is good still. He restrains Satan from troubling me in the least. I feel no ravishing joy, but I have settled peace in believing.

## An Epistle

I was wont to be troubled at the consideration of the putrefaction of my body in the grave, that it must be separated from the society of men, and be wrapt up in darkness, but I am now beyond all those things, and long to be at rest.

*In words to this purpose she oft expressed her mind. Once she said, It is hard work to be under the Arrest of Death, as I am, with all my senses in their free exercise. She oft expressed fear of being held long under those pains; yet with child like submission, like that of Christ when he prayed, that the Cup might pass from him, which he was drinking. And they were both heard in the thing they feared; for the Cup passed from Christ so soon as his prayer was ended: and her patience was protracted, till Death had set her free.*

*On the Monday morning before she died, a worthy Friend of Mr. Caryl. hers, and choice Minister of the Gospel, came to see her,*

## to the Reader.

her, and spake to her of the Glory she was going into, and the way God had led her in unto it, and prayed with her. When he had taken his leave, she told me, she perceived he was sent of God to scatter some Clouds that were gathering about her, when he came in, but his gracious Words had chased away that darkness. During the seven years wherein I enjoyed her, she would very frequently issue forth in discourse of Eternity, and often would say, What shall I do when I come to launch into that Ocean? The frequent contemplation of it made it easie to her at last; for when her time came to change her station, she did it with such cheerfulness that her dear Friends and Acquaintance seeing her, had their sorrow for parting with it ballanced with Joy. So deep was the sence she had of the state of souls departed, in regard of the unchangeableness of their condition, as I have known her shed plenty of tears for some, whose lives gave little hopes, though

## An Epistle

though she had no relation to them. None needed other attractive of her love, than to walk with God, and endeavour to rescue souls from Satan. She loved Children exceedingly, and could not bear their hard usage, and would frequently say, she hated the name of a Mother-in-law, and could not endure to think her self in that relation, because it was generally the occasion of so much cruelty and wrong. When she met with any poor child, whose countenance and habit declared his condition hard; Look on that poor child, said she, I fear it hath a Mother-in-law. She delighted much to talk with young ones, and was very assiduous to take occasion to open their damnable state by nature to them, and the remedy provided, which she always did in so plain and familiar manner, as I did not think myself accomplished to speak to the hearts of any that ever I conversed with. For, let this part of her discourse be looked upon with an understanding.

## to the Reader.

dervaluing eye: For if ( among other subjects ) the Kingdom of Heaven consist of little ones , then those that shew them the way to it , will doubtless shine like stars for ever and ever.

I was much more benefited by her example in the practick part of Christianity ( and therein the true value and dignity of it consists ) than I was able to requite in contributing to her knowledge in the Theory of it , of which benefit notwithstanding she made mention , frequently acknowledging God's mercy to her in it.

If it be said by some ( and I make no question it will be , or at least thought ; for the sinful mind of man will suggest any thing , to secure it self from Conviction of being in a carnal , perishing , damnable state , all the time it is so ) the Devil was once very strong in this Woman , he tempted her to great sins , and brought her almost to despair. I thank God Almighty , he never had so much power over me ; I have ever been of good hope ;



## An Epistle

hope ; if you call this Conversion, keep it to your self, and much good may it do you : but God bless me, and every good body from such a Condition.

To this I say in general, that I have not such store of words, as out of them I can pick and chuse some to give this Objector his due, he being the spawn, and extract of folly and self-confidence. But that this which he contemns, is Conversion, is notoriously known to all the Children of Wisdom ; and it is a state wherein every one that's not found before Death removes his habitation, will undoubtedly perish. I shall certainly meet with him who agrees not with me herein, at a place, where he will be of my mind.

The Devil never was so strong with me, (saith he) as to lead me into such distress.

And how make you that appear ? you snore out the evidence of it in your Apopleckish fit : you are well because you feel not your sickness, and whole because  
your



## to the Reader.

your wound throbs not. A dead man may so argue, you never knew the Devils terrifying rage: that's because you are under his reign. Princes levy not War against Subjects that pay them due allegiance; nor doth the Master of the house muster up his powers so long as none attempt to dispossess him. The Keeper of a prison is quiet while his Prisoners are so, but if he peeps in at a crevice, or by listening, perceives them tinking with their Fetters, or making the least provision for an escape, he doubles his Guards, and encreases their weight of Iron. Nay, to descend from Men to the behaviour of Beasts, ask Job and he will tell thee, Job 6.5. that the wild Ass doth not bray when he hath grass enough, nor the Oxe low over his fodder. Ignorance, in which thou art held, is a Chain long enough to take in the links of every lust. Yet cryest thou, the Devil hath not such power over me. Know wretched man, that the reign of sin makes a man servant to it: and unknown,

## An Epistle

known, undiscovered lusts sit at most ease in their Throne, meeting with most undisturbed obedience from their subjects, as having no resistance, so much as from a natural Conscience (which is the sole Officer set up in a natural man to hinder him from all manner of extravagancy, and brutish madness. Therefore the blindness of such a Beast as thou art, leading thee to the Precipice of Hell, makes every seeing person tremble, as thou thyself dost when thou seest a man that hath no eyes walking about the brink of a Well, or Coalpit. Some without pumping pour out buckets of Uncleaness, Blasphemies, and Execrations; wallow in the vomit of Drunkenness, and multiply Bribery, Injustice, Oppression, and all kind of Cruelty, and the burthen of the Song must still be, [The Devil is not so strong in me.] Well may those think so then, who have escaped the pollutions of the world in such lusts. But what strength will these men allow the Devil to have in them, be-

## to the Reader.

before they admit him to have any at all ? whereas in truth the chain of an unsanctified estate secures the Devils possession in all who are held in it. All the Prisoners in Newgate are not there for Treason, or Murther, yet they may be in for that, that will as certainly send them to Tyburn.

But still you urge, What make you of us ? We have peace, and you that call your selves the People of God have no more : we worship God as well as you ; and what would you have us do ?

It is true, you have peace ; and the People of God have no more, it may be not so much. The fault I find is with the Nature of your Peace. Theirs and yours too, is a Peace that passeth all understanding, but in very different senses. For what peace to the wicked, saith my God ?

You worship God as well as they : not so well (Friend) though as much ; for yours is superstitious, formal, fleshly Worship, tendered to a deity created in  
your

## An Epistle

your own fancy : theirs the Oblations  
of spiritual instituted Worship to the  
God that made Heaven and Earth ,  
and the wide Sea.

Things standing thus, ask your selves  
how it will fare with you, when you must  
exchange your well-adorned Galleries,  
for the dark and cloudy Walks of tem-  
poral and eternal Death : Your plea-  
sant bathing Tubs for Rivers of bur-  
ning Pitch ; when those Veins and  
Arteries of your Bodies, wherein heal-  
thy blood, and lively Spirits ride cir-  
cuit, shall be filld with Fire and Brim-  
stone; and this state to endure for ever.  
I fear then you will find the Devil  
strong in you, and that a good conditi-  
on, that you pray God to deliver you,  
and every good body from. Give me  
leave in the mean while to advance my  
Prayer against yours, that God would  
bring every lost Soul into the saving  
sence of its lostness : and that these  
darts might fall into your Consciences,  
and remain in the wound till they  
be

## to the Reader.

be drawn out by the hand of the Spirit, and healed by the Blood of the Cross. And let those read here the great Works of God (and be comforted, strengthened and established) whose eternal happiness (in the despised way of grace) is secured, assuring themselves, that he that hath begun a good work in them, will perfect it: in no wise casting them away that come to him, or failing to save to the utmost all that come to God by him. It is true, the gate is strait, and the way narrow that leadeth to Life, not so much in it self, but from blind sinful man, who chooseth any of the broad wayes that sin presents before it. The difficulties that this holy Woman found in it, she hath here declared, and directed to be made publick, partly to bear her Testimony against those who think otherwise. She was careful that it might be in terms that should give no just offence, fearing to offend the Jew, or Greek, or Church

## An Epistle

of Christ, and endeavouring, so much as she could without sin, to comply with all, that she might gain some : to which end, though she wrote it not with her own hand (as being too infirm for such a work, yet having dictated it, she oft examined it, and caused some alterations to be made in it, after they were wrote : so that a Will wrote by a Lawyer or Scrivener, is no less truly the Testators than this was hers.

Before I end this Preface, give me leave to inform you into what familiarity she was groan with Death, some months before she met with it. It is called in Scripture, the King of Terrors, and notoriously known to have amazed the boldest Constitutions; yea, and those sometimes who have attained to good measures in grace. But God, to shew his Sovereignty, bound this Leviathan for his Handmaid to play with, and made it her servant, inasmuch as she called it her Fathers man sent to  
fetch

## to the Reader.

fetch her from School: *And upon a time, about two months before she dyed, sitting with her, she fell into this discourse with me: My dear (said she) I shall be in Heaven this Winter. I pray take care of this poor body of mine when I am dead; for Death cannot separate it from Christ; and therefore see that it be used comely. Let me beg you to close mine eyes your self, and let not foolish passion keep you from rejoycing at my happiness in that hour. Let my chin be kept from falling, by pinning the ends of my pinner under it; and when it is stiff with cold, then leave them loose, but put on no musler. When I am put in my Coffin, raise my head with a small pillow, and turn it to one side, that it may resemble sleep, and as little of ghastliness appear in it as may be. Were it your lot to depart before me, I would do the like for*

## An Epistle, &c.

you and more; not out of hardness of heart, but intire love. *As inconsiderable as this may seem, I know not why it should not be here recorded, as well as Joseph's charge to his Brethren concerning his bones in the Scripture, being an act of Faith as his was. Being not like ever to meet with such a subject whilst I live, I would willingly make this Entry larger; but mine heart so much affects mine eyes, that I cannot see to hold open the door any longer.*

CONFER

VIOLATE  
MURDER CON-





# CONVERSION

## Exemplified.



**M**Y Birth being in a Family which (according to the value put upon things of that nature) is able to make as large a demonstration of Antiquity, from honourable Ancestors, as the generality of that rank of Persons can do; I had withall, the Blessing of that Education in it, which might free me from being a dishonour to it, being bred in the best and most ingenious wayes, that that place, and the distraction of the times, by reason of civil Wars (which began in my Childhood, and continued till my grown Age) could afford.

It was (to the best of my remembrance) about the tenth year of my age, when God (who is rich in mercy) began to declare a design upon me, looked up in the secret of

his Counsels before the foundations of the World were laid, of bringing me to the knowledge of himself in the face of Jesus Christ; to whom though I was born an Enemy, and of whose Natures, Persons, Offices and Ordinances I was stupidly ignorant, yet by the work of his own Spirit, and effectual teachings of it, I became so well acquainted with those great Mysteries in the true substance of them, and that without the ordinary help of mans teaching ( of which that place was wanting ) as I was thereby in the infancy of my life enabled to receive the satisfaction of a Mediator, to the justification of my person, and the Spirit of the same Mediator for the sanctification of my nature, and that some years before I understood them in their distinct and proper terms. Upon this so choice and signal Love, I cannot think at any time seriously, without washing the feet of him with Fears, who loved me, and washed me in his own Blood: To him be Glory for ever.

The method which the holy Ghost used in bringing me to God through Christ, was that which he observes in the ordinary execution of his work, as I have since been informed by Teachers of the Gospel, and

experienced Christians, with whom then I had not the like acquaintance; and it was first by convincing me of sin, and then of righteousness; the manner thus. Satan mingled his temptation with a childish disposition of waggery in me, and stirred me up to hurt one of my Brothers in his sleep, out of no reason, but an inclination to do harm. God (who wants not means to break the Serpents head) took occasion from hence to present me with the view of my nature, how vile it was, that it should be acting in me to provoke me to hurt an innocent Babe in his sleep, yea, a Brother, who was as dear to me as mine own life.

A window being thus opened, plenty of Light shed it self in, whereby I was discovered to my self, and that discovery was attended with so much terrour, and sence of eternal wrath from God, due to me, a guilty sinner, as the Bed I then lay upon afforded me no ease; from which I arose in the dark and silent night, to lament my self and woful state: It was a dreadful time, never to be forgotten of me.

Satan finding himself under so unexpected a defeat, pursued his work to countertermine the work of God thus begun in

me : and in order thereunto bespread my troubled soul with plenty of fiery Darts. The first that he press'd me to, was Murther, and that of my near Relations; this by the assistance of God, I soon cast out, being convinced how impious, abominable and unnatural it was to destroy my best Friends. Then he urged me to make away my self as a Reprobate without hope : but this I looked at as more unnatural than the other. Nature (as polluted as it was) stood amazed, and exercised great reluctancy against these bloody Temptations.

Nevertheless, perplex'd I was in a dreadful measure, and knew not what to do : Gospel I was ignorant of, though I had read it often ; for the vail was over my heart, and the Scriptures were to me a Book clasp'd up, having neither from Sermons or Conferences ever received help or light, whereby spiritually to understand them ; without which they are but a dead and deadly letter.

To communicate my condition to any, I judg'd it most unadvised ; because I knew none that understood it. For, for those of my acquaintance who I did think knew most of the way to Heaven, I had always observ'd, that they counted wounds of

of conscience for sin, melancholy fits. And if the wound were deeper and more smarting than ordinary, then they esteemed them maddish upon whom it was, and that it befel them for being guilty of some foul secret sin, worse than themselves had ever committed. And I did fear if they knew my case, they would think no better on't. In which respect I was very careful to hide it from them.

Being at this set, I turned aside from my black thoughts, and said to my heart, (as *Solomon* in another case) *Goto, I will try thee with mirth.* I sought diversion in merry company, and would thereby have abated the rage of my guilty conscience, as *Cain* sought to do by building of Cities.

This remedy encreased the disease, for it multiplied sin in me, and God thereupon multiplied my sorrows.

The Way being by his Providence thus hedged up with thorns about me, I knew not how to get out. This path at length he discovered to me, that if I would ever be at peace I must get my sin pardoned, in regard that it was most evident that all my anguish and torment proceeded from the guilt of unpardoned sin.

This I forthwith cloted with, being under clear conviction of the truth of it. Then thought I, If I would have my sins pardoned, and get God to be my friend, I must serve him better than I have done yet. Here I fell most intently upon seeking Righteousness by the works of the Law. I read the *Bible* and the *Practice of Piety*, and such other Books as I could get, that treated of a godly and devout conversation. I set upon private Prayer, and, as a help to it, got Prayer-books which I did use, having been so ignorantly educated as to know no better.

From these written Prayers I cannot say I found not any help, but very little I am sure, they being too dull and lazy a way to quicken a poor soul that was gasping for life. When Children are very young they will swallow meat of the Nurses chewing, but when they are grown and have teeth, they use them, and loath that which is prepared by others. Thus it was with me in this case, having then no prejudice begotten in me against them, by conversing with those that were formerly called *Puritans*, *Sectaries*, *Sobismatics*, and now called *Phanatics*, of which sort of People I then knew not any, nor had  
read

read their Books. But I do discharge my conscience upon my dying bed, in declaring my experience for the information of such as need it; praying earnestly, that the Testimony of a poor consumed dying creature, might prevaile with those, to whom the knowledge hereof shall come, who think it worship enough to reade over a Prayer certain times in a day, to distrust their condition before it is past cure. I have nor parts; and if I had, I would not here imploy them to dispute the point of stinted forms of Prayer, invented by some for the use of others. Only this I did experience, that the immediate sighs, groans and longing desires of my heart, sometimes exprest without words, sometime in such words as occurred to my memory, were graciously answered, and consequently accepted of God; and consequently to that wrought by his Spirit, whose office is to be an Advocate in us, as Christ is for us, let the blind carnal world think and speak what they please to the contrary. My wants were such, as I found no printed Prayer that took notice of them: and whether those Form-makers ever knew them or no, I will not judge: but if the Form-users were as hard followed as I

was,



was, I believe they would cast away their crutches, and scramble forward with their own legs: I think their distress would not allow them time to look for a book. A Prisoner condemned at the Bar begs for his Life, without the help of a Petition written; and such was my case.

But to return from this digression to the relation of the state I stood in at this time. It was, as I said a little before, a state of righteousness by personal obedience; for I was then of the *works of the Law*, as the Apostle's phrase is, *Gal. 3. 10*. I say, of the works of the Law, as of a trade in which I thought to earn eternal life, and consequently I was under the curse, because it is written, *Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things written in the book of the Law, to do them.*

It is nothing I can boast of, and very little I can say, as to what I did in this case, to render my self well-pleasing to God, and acceptable in his sight: but what I could I did in works of piety and charity. I thought most reverently of all persons in whom I did discern a strict and circumspect conversation, or would at any time speak of God or Holiness with any zeal or affection. My indignation



nation being no less kindled against the contrary, especially those who were called the Clergy. What I then observed among some of that rank, was then, is still, and for ever will be the abhorrency of my soul; but to mention it I am ashamed. Unhappy England, who art greatly infected with this generation. For, *if Salt hath lost its savour, wherewith shall it be seasoned? and if the blind lead the blind, both must fall into the ditch.*

I was for some years tossed in this Sea, where I found no calm, nor any bottom to cast anchor in; having the knowledge of sin, but not of grace. I judged my self the worst of sinners, and oft wish'd I had never been born: increasing my sin by that wish. Walking sometimes alone, when my fellows were in the pleasure of their childish sports, I thought them blessed in comparison of my self, as being not guilty of such sins as I was guilty of. By these steps did the work of deep humiliation and bitter mourning for sin proceed in me. And to that precipice was I brought, that though God put under his hand secretly, and did support me, yet in mine own thoughts I was oft at the brink of utter despaire. The dreadful consideration of

appearing before the Judgement Seat of Christ came into my mind.

The first representation I had of him, was, that to him was committed the Judgement of the great Day, and that he would exercise that Authority to my Condemnation, unless I obtained mercy and favour from him. Now notwithstanding I had oft read the story of Christs sufferings, and wept in reading it, being greatly affected with it, and had a very high reverence about the Sacrament of his Supper, being instituted to preserve the memorial of those sufferings: Yet now I perceive (and have done long) that those were but humane passions working upon an object of great sorrows, but no sanctified affections, moved through a due sense of the meritorious cause of Christs passion, and consequently altogether without any saving knowledge of him. Yet such as resemble in that frame of heart, know, that they deal with Christ, as Heathens do with their idol gods.

Now before I had this so near a discovery of Christ, all my care was to please God without his mediation: For I did think Him at peace with me already, and that I had obtained his favour by my love to

to him, expressing it self in the manner before related.

This I have since much observed to be the case of poor senseless souls, never effectually touch'd with the sense of sin; The title of a Christian and the common notion of Christ, quiets and pleases them sufficiently, saying in effect, Let us go with thee and bear thy name, but we will eat our own bread. But God left me not to this pass, but caused the real Majesty and greatness of his Son so to break out upon me, as to convince me that the same honour was due to him that was due to the Father; and that I must apply to him as the onely Peace-maker and Mediator betweend God and my soul. At this time was the Scripture fulfilled in me, which saith, *No man cometh to the Father but by the Son*, and again, *No man cometh to me, except the Father draw him.*

Satan, from whom before this time I had received no temptation concerning Christ, (like a Lyon in a seeming sleep) roused himself with great fury and rage, that if possible he might keep me from believing, and closing with God in a Covenant of Grace. The first scruple he cast in, was, With what safety or prudence I could ad-

venture my eternal happiness upon him, of whom so great a Question was in the world, whether he were the Son of God or no?

To help my self against this, I read the History of him in the Evangelists, but could not do it peaceably, for the blasphemies injected by Satan into my thoughts concerning him: By this means, the old wound of my Conscience, not yet healed, began again to throb and bleed afresh: Faith, which carnal people speak of as if they wore it in their Pockets, I found hard, to a degree of difficulty next impossible: My desires prest vehemently after Faith, but found no adherence to or resting on Christ, which I could perceive or take comfort from: For while I read, meditated of, and sought to Jesus Christ, I could find nothing but unbelieving, undervaluing thoughts, partly arising from mine own heart, and partly cast in by Satan. At length, having spent many sad and weary hours in searching, I met with the Parable of the unjust Judge, recorded, *Luke 18. 1, 2, 3, &c.* under which Christ recommends to us importunity in prayer, from the example of him, who administered Justice to a poor Widow, to free himself from the trouble he fore-  
saw

saw she would give him, though he feared not God, nor regarded Man. The Spirit of God set this so home upon me, as closing the book suddenly, I said within my self, Is it even so! then Lord I will never give thee rest, but my soul shall with thy gracious Assistance, follow hard after thee till I have found the thing I seek. Upon this I found some dawnings of Faith and Hope; yet was this twilight soon made dark by the advantage Satan took of my weakness, to recover in what degree he could his almost lost possession. To the best of my remembrance I was exercised in this manner, with various disquietments, for the space of three years; which while I revolved in my mind meditating on my condition, and walking alone, this Scripture was suggested to me, *For a little moment have I hid my face from thee, but with everlasting kindness will I return to thee, saith the Lord.* At the first view I knew it to be Scripture, but understood it not under the notion of a Gospel-promise, as being then unacquainted with that term But this was not more pertinent than seasonable; the Consolation issuing from it, being imprest very deep upon me, I fell to reason from it; What if God hides his face from me for a season,

C

which

which I think long? admit all my dayes, yet, it is but a moment to Eternity; and the happiness of being received into favour at last, will swallow up all my grief in the *interim*, and that in a moment to be sure.

The History of St. Paul's *Conversion*, was a great inducement to my Faith also at this time. In the strength of that, which I had by this means obtained, I resolved to go foreward, waiting the good pleasure of the Lord for further manifestations.

The next establishment I received, was, by reading the story of one cured by Christ of Blindness, *John 9*. In reading which Chapter, I observed the manner of the cure, and the consequence of it.

I took notice of the behaviour of the hypocritical, rebellious, gain-saying Pharisees, towards him on whom the miracle was wrought, and of their opprobrious Blasphemies against him that wrought it. I found my heart cleaving to the man that was healed for owning Christ, and my hatred kindled against them, who upon this occasion, did reproach and vilifie him. Yet withall, the old Tempter played his game, vexing me with insinuations, that for ought I knew the Pharisees spake true of him. being hereby put into an unquiet frame, I

sate lamenting the hardness of my heart, and concluding I could not obtain Mercy at his hand, of whom I was apt to entertain such base thoughts : Hereupon, thorough weariness, and heaviness of spirit, I fell into a slumber, in which Christ seemed to appear to me, with his breast open, and Blood issuing out as Water from a Fountain, and uttered these words, *viz, Come, drink freely, and be satisfied.* Upon this invitation, I seemed to draw near to him; and to drink of his Blood abundantly, and with great pleasure ; continuing still thirsting, and drinking, while I awoke from sleep, and found my self gasping for breath, and soul and body refreshed as with a rich Cordial : My soul was hereby greatly melted with love to Christ, for condescending to me in so great a strait, with so much tenderness and familiarity ; and I did resolve to believe in him with the same earnestness with which in my dream I seemed to drink in his Blood. From that time I began to have the sense of his Love, and enjoyment of his Presence : yet not without opposition ; for Satan instantly slept in, and told me it was but a dream ; and would I be so foolish as to bottom Soul-comfort upon dreams ?

I answered, That I would not contend about the nature of this dream, but sure I was, that when I was awakened out of it, God did enable me to believe more steadfastly than before; and this I looked upon as a sound argument of comfort.

After this I continued with much more Peace, Light, and direction whence to fetch Peace of Conscience, than I had formerly been acquainted with, till the Forge of Hell had formed another Weapon to break this Work in me: which was by perswading me, That the Scripture was not the Word of God, but meerly of man's invention: and if so, it was but an imaginary Christ I believed in, and a fained faith I took comfort from: Nay, and further, that if the Scriptures were not of God, nor Christ a real Saviour, then was there no God at all, and so all my labour lost in seeking him. Thus the Devil coucht his argument, making one thing very dependent on another. For certainly if there is a God, he hath revealed himself; and if not in the Scriptures, no where. To this assurance God hath now in great mercy brought me: but in the infancy of my Conversion, it was not so with me. For so far was I left to the close pursuit of my spiritual Enemy,

and



and sunk so low under his strong Assaults, as I seemed sometime to conclude. There was neither Heaven nor Hell, God nor Devil. Behold how pititious a Creature was I! who without God's special Assistance, should have been led to determine against mine own tryed experience, in things more certain than those objects about which sense is conversant! For before this I had enjoyed the Presence of God, and some taste of his heavenly Comforts; and felt the power of Satan with some scorplings of hellish anguish. But remaining under this distress, doubting whether there was a God, yet thinking there was, and honouring those that walked conscionably, because I supposed they knew it, I pitcht upon this; If there be a Devil, surely there is a God. Hereupon, though I were of a very timorous nature, I oft resorted into dark and lonesome places, hoping to see the Devil, as a means to convince me that there was a God.

This is put down, to shew the extremity of my Temptation, and folly of seeking that way of relief. While I was under this Tryal, I perceived, that by it Satan endeavoured to bring me to a licentious course of life. For if no God, nor Devil,

Heaven nor Hell, what need a man care what he speaks, thinks, or doth, further than to accomplish his lustful designs, and satisfy the flesh? Let them consider whose works they do, and what their wayes without Repentance will be, who muster up Arguments in Print, denying the Eternity of the punishment of Reprobates.

But to proceed to speak of the straits I now lay under: In them I endeavoured to apply to God in Prayer; but such horrid Blasphemies upon that attempt were cast in, as I was greatly discouraged to think upon him, or draw near to him in any act of Worship. How sad a time this was, I appeal to those who have tasted of the like Cup: It brought me to this resolution, That if God, about whom I had such conflicts, had a Being (which, for all this, I could not wholly be beaten from the belief of) and would manifest his Favour to me in Christ, I was willing to be a Vassal to the most tyrannical Monarch that ever the earth did bear, all my dayes; or to be exposed to any other suffering which he should think fit to inflict. How unworthy am I then, who have received the accomplishment of that desire, and yet want that affection to God, and rejoycing in him,  
which

which I thought that Mercy would have produced ; yea, notwithstanding, he hath added thereunto, a plentiful possession of outward Comforts ? I want a heart to hate my self for this, and words to signify the hatred I feel. How can I appear in the presence of God with this burthen of ingratitude, if I were not brought in by my faithful High Priest ? As to the means of getting free from this encounter, thus it was ; Being brought, through long wrestling, to the very point of yielding, and giving all for lost, like a routed Army, or beaten man ; fresh strength was ministered to me from this Text, *No temptation hath befallen you, but that which is common to man ; but God is Faithful, who with the temptation, will give an issue that ye shall be able to bear it.* This Scripture I met with, reading the Chapter wherein it is ; and pausing upon it, I took special notice, that the opinion I had long nourished, was, that my case was peculiar, and none ever like me before. This I found to be untrue ; For the Text in so many words, saith the contrary.

Then, that as my case was none other than had befallen others, so God was faithful, and of his faithfulness would give me a good issue out of it in his due time.

And I especially note it, as the first time that ever I did think it to be God's dealing, to leave sinners to the buffeting of Satan and his winnowings; and to the turbulence of their own spirits, as a means to convert them to himself, and sanctifie and save them. This light I had by meditating upon the words, being without the benefit of Preachers, good Books, or experienced Christians.

After these things, I continued waiting on God in the way of such duties as I understood, exercising my self in prayer, reading, and the works of my particular calling, but attained to little establishment in a way of abiding comfort, meeting still sometimes with one temptation, sometimes with another; some new, some old ones repeated, according to the multitude of Satan's subtilties, and the opportunities my corrupt heart, or iniquities of the time and place wherein I lived, ministred unto him.

I remember not so well as to relate it distinctly, how long I continued in this condition; nor the manner of my release from it: By reason of which I must omit many considerable circumstances. But in general, after about two years added to the three years formerly mentioned, the  
Lord

Lord brake in upon me with a very plentiful discovery of himself, and enabled me to renew the actings of my faith upon him. I was immediately thereupon filled with joy and peace more than I can express : being thoroughly convinced that there is a God, the Scriptures were of his inspiring, and that Christ was the Saviour of believing repentant sinners. The Ordinances I enjoyed were my meat and drink, the Sabbath my delight. I speak not this, as if I had that measure of faith, joy and delight as I ought to have, or as many of the People of God (I suppose) have had ; but I call it filling me with these graces comparatively to what I formerly had experienced. For in this whole *Narrative* I am very fearful to lie for the glory of God, by relating any work of his in me higher than it was, and withal would be very loth to diminish, detract from, or conceal any of the merciful dispensations of his love and grace towards me.

Before I removed out of the Country where the Work which hath been the subject of what is here written pass upon me, I conceive it useful to remember the deportment of some Relations to me, with the frame of my heart in reference thereto.

For

For, however I did endeavour to hide this great change from the eyes of all men, yet it had been as easie for me to suppress a perfume, by shutting it in [the hollow of my hand. Grace as well as Sin hath the advantage of its kind, which is to discover it self. I could not but retire my self often to enjoy communion with God; In which retirement, when some observed me, they did commend me; others reproached me, and said, I grew bookish. One called me Hypocrite, and said, *A young Saint would be an old Devil.*

Such words troubled me greatly all the while I was in doubt of mine own condition, as to my being in Christ: And the party that spake them, was an eminent instrument in the hand of the Devil to distress and discompose me. But after I received from the Lord some tastes and evidences of his Love, those revilings and hard speeches comforted me; for I esteemed it my Glory, to suffer shame for his Names sake.

By this time, finding the place where I lived, in reference to Religion, without means of light, and (as the fruit of it) exceedingly sinful, and prophane, men and women generally wallowing in brutish lusts, I grew extream weary of living in it  
and

and thereupon sought God in Prayer earnestly, to find a way of removing me, where I might have better example, better teaching, better helps and advantages, of perfecting what he had graciously begun in me, having had my soul often vexed, by hearing and seeing, as Lot's was. In this, after a short time, God answered me, inclining the hearts of my Parents to send me to *London*, and placed me for a while with some Friends in and near that City. This change of place, and newness of acquaintance, produced new temptations: For though the Seed of God abiding in me, kept in me some tenderness of spirit, yet many worldly diversions from my former and more constant fellowship with God, brought me into a very drowsie temper. I lived with Professors of Religion, but found not the power of Christian Principles acting in them, especially some of them, though from others I had help and encouragement: But some were so choaked with worldly cares, and drowned in carnal groundless jealousies, as they became burthen some and uncomfortable to themselves, and those that conversed with them, especially if they had dependance on them, as I had. Nevertheless, he that bringeth Good out of Evil, and whose

whose Covenant is, *That all things shall work together for good to them that love Him*, made use of that unacceptable quality, to awaken me and cause me to reflect upon my declinings.

God is a jealous God, and will suffer no rival or competitor in the hearts of his Children : Thereupon to chasten me, for suffering my soul to wander after, and cleave to worldly delights and expectations, he lent a Person of Quality, with whom I lived, under the dominion of an infirmity very natural to her, and very sinful (the God of Mercy convince her of it, and reform her) groundless Jealousie : An apprehension possess her by reason of it, that I had an unworthy design upon her ; and as untrue as it was, it put her, and she me, by reason of it, into a very great discomposure. This passage I should altogether omit, if I could make the story of God's dealing with me in this case perfect without it ; nor are such things to be slighted : For He, without whose providence, *a Sparrow falleth not to the ground*, and by whom *the hairs of our head are numbered*, must be eyed and acknowledged in all his wayes. The Children of *Isaac*, must learn of their Father to see the



the Face of God in a very *Esau*. Now being much burthened under the Oppression of the foresaid false imagination, I had (according to my former course) recourse to God, who seasonably, and very effectually presented to my mind many passages of Scripture ; by which I was in some measure recovered from my backsliding : for a better name I do not know it by : Some of which were these, *Rom. 8. 28.* *For we know that all things work together for good to them that love God.* Another was, *Ps-l. 139. 13.* *Search me, O God, and know my heart, try me, and know my thoughts, and see if there be any wicked way in me ; and lead me in the Way everlasting.* This I made use on, when the fear of an hypocritical state was upon me, occasioned by my late decays.

Let this suffice briefly to point, at what they were, how they came, and what means God applied to recover me.

After these things, (the whole life of one in Christ being a warfare) I met with many conflicts ; and still the most constant one was about my Soul-state, whether in Christ, or not in Christ, reconciled to God by his Blood, or not reconciled ? and thorough the remnant of Corruption, I am not  
altogether

altogether delivered from this temptation at this very time. I received much establishment at one time from *Isa. 27. 5. Let him take hold of my strength, that he may make peace with me, and he shall make peace with me.* At another time hearing this Scripture read, *Psal. 25. 10. All the Paths of the Lord are Mercy and Truth to such as keep his Covenants, and his Testimonies:* I was assisted to have very comfortable reflections upon it. By the Paths of the Lord, I understood his providential Dispensations, wherein he walks, as men do, in a path to an intended end, which is the accomplishment of his Glory, in bringing the Seed of Christ to Glory. Now, though the Paths are exceeding various: Sometimes God lifts his People up; sometimes he casts them down; sometimes he gives them victory over sin, Satan and themselves; sometimes he leaves them to be led captive, and then enlarges them out of that Bondage, for the most part, by Afflictions: One while he tries their Grace, and gives them the sense and comfort of it; another while he chastens Disobedience, and gives them the fruit of that in mortification: But let the Paths of God be never so many, and seem to lye  
 never

never so cross (as Road-ways over a Champion) yet are they all Mercy even to those that taste most Severity and Truth, yea, though they seem contrary to his Promise, to them that keep his Covenant and his Testimonies. So that in the way of obedience to his Testimonies, and cleaving to his Covenant, I was assured all his Paths to me would be Mercy and Truth.

Isa. 3. 12. *Go and proclaim these words towards the North, and say, Return thou back sliding Israel, saith the Lord, and I will not cause mine Anger to fall upon thee; For I am Merciful, saith the Lord, and I will not keep mine Anger for ever; only acknowledge thine iniquity, that thou hast transgressed against the Lord thy God. Every thing in this Text comforted me. First, that God express his forwardness to receive wandering sinners, by sending forth a Proclamation to invite their return. Go and proclaim, saith he. Then, that this was directed to the worst sort of sinners, Backsliders. The Backslider seems to tell the World, that upon his particular experience, there is nothing worth enjoying in the Wayes of God; and this is the worst reflection upon them than can be. None so bad as false friends. Traytors in a Court,*  
are

the worst Traitors. Backsliding *Israel* notwithstanding is called upon to return. This I looked upon as an evil to which I was very prone, even to grow weary of the strict wayes of God. *I will not cause mine Anger to fall upon thee : And again, I am Merciful, and will not keep mine Anger for ever.* I was convinced that I did deserve present wrath and eternal wrath, did not Mercy thus step in. The last thing is direction to a duty, wherein to expect the dispensation of mercy, acknowledge thine iniquity that thou hast transgressed, which requires not an empty heartless verbal Confession, but Confession with hatred of sin, Faith in the pardon of it ; and endeavour to reform it. *Psal. 103. 8, 9. The Lord is merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and plenteous in Mercy : He will not alwayes chide, neither will he keep his Anger for ever.* This place supported my Faith under the consideration of my merit, which was Wrath from God, whereto he declares himself slow ; and also it ministered hope to me of deliverance from those corrective Effects of God's displeasure against sin in me, which he out of love laid upon me. *Isa. 41. 10. Fear not, for I am with thee ; be not dismayed, for I am thy God.*

*God. I will strengthen thee, yea, I will help thee, yea, I will uphold thee with the right-hand of my Righteousness.* This Text was applied to me, when I was beset with variety of troubles, some inward, some outward. Many from my self, respecting the state I stood in, and the years I had attained to : Some from my Relations in the flesh, whose troubles were many, and their outward condition clouded ; and the spiritual estate of many of them, not such as I was satisfied in. But from this place, God, by the right-hand of his Righteousness ( as he here calls it ) reached out support to me : *Fear not, be not dismayed.* With both these did I at this time contend, not only fear, but dismay, discouraging fear ; for both the nature, and dress of things, as the image of them appeared to me, was very tremendous. Therefore God applied comfort to me in a term of relation ; *I am thy God* ; as in a gracious Promise of presence, *I will be with thee* ; and unfolds what he means by being with me, viz. to help in every difficulty, and uphold under every burthen.

*Isa. 26. 3. Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is staid upon thee, because he trusteth in thee. Ibid. 40. 31. But they*

that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength, they shall mount up with wings as Eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; they shall walk, and not be faint.

John 3. 16. God so loved the World, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him, should not perish, but have everlasting Life. Isa. 43. 25. But I, even I am, he that blotteth out thy transgression for mine own sake. Psal. 32. 8. I will instruct thee, and teach thee in the Way that thou shalt go, and guide thee with mine eye. Rom. 4. 5. To him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his Faith is counted for Righteousness. These Scriptures eminently holding forth the most Essentials in Christianity, were of very great use to me, not once or twice, but so oft, as I had recourse to them, which was very frequent, being oft in tryals, which made them seasonable; especially Psal. 32. 8. formerly wrote down, was a Scripture which I repaired to in all doubtful cases. I was taught from John 3. 16. that the Love of God was the Fountain of my happiness, being that, out of which Christ himself was given for me. Rom. 4. 5. instructed me, that a Righteousness laid hold on by Faith, justifies without the least addition

dition of works wrought by me, which of how great use soever ( being indeed one end of that which Christ hath suffered and done for me, that I might be God's Workmanship in him created to good works ) yet no material meritorious, no, or the least moving cause why my person should be accepted of God : In this respect I count them all lost, as Paul did his, *Phil.* 3. 8.

The Prayer of Christ, recorded *John* 17. 20, 21, 22, 23, 24. afforded me so great Comfort, that I cannot be satisfied without leaving a particular account of it. The words are, *Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also that shall believe in me through their Word, that they may be all one, as thou Father art in me and I in thee, that they also may be one in us, that the World may believe that thou hast sent me : And the Glory which thou gavest me, I have given them, that they may be one even as we are one. I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one, and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them as thou hast loved me.*

Father, I will that they also whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory which thou hast given

me: For thou lovedst me before the Foundation of the World. The Love of Christ, in these words set forth, did, and doth so drink up my spirit, as I am like one drunken with Wine, not able to speak of the sweetness of it. Well, to understand, and savour his Words in this Prayer, is (if I know any thing of such entertainment) to be led into his Banqueting-house, and Wine-cellar; of whose Love the *Song of Solomon* speaks.

It being my lot to live in an age wherein Error abounded, I think fit to mention those Scriptures, which perswaded me from some of those Errors, of the most dangerous nature, as most evidently against the foundation of that Covenant, which God had confirmed to me. The one was the freedom of an unregenerate will to believe in Christ. *Ephes. 2. 8.* it is thus written; *By Grace ye are saved thorow Faith, and that not of your selves; it is the gift of God.* Besides the experience I had of my natural inability to receive Christ by Faith, this Text tells me expressly, That men have it not from themselves, but that; *it is the Gift of God.*

I have heard this to be a point of great controversy among the Learned; wherein,



in, if the experience of a sinner burthened with guilt, may moderate, I doubt not but to have a determination to the sense I have given.

Again, *Jer. 31. 19.* I read thus, *After I was turned, I repented, and after I was instructed, I smote upon my thigh: I was ashamed, and even confounded, because I did bear the reproach of my youth.* This place shews, that God's work upon us, goes before our works towards him: Man cannot turn till he is turned, or smite upon his thigh, before he is instructed. I therefore agree with those, who say that the carnal will is in bondage to sin, as well as the carnal mind, neither of them being subject to the Law of God, or can be: For I do conceive, that without supernatural instruction (which I take to be the same with spiritual Illumination, or an Anointing which teacheth all things) the will is altogether incapacitated to chuse aright. Nor am I ashamed to acknowledge those whose labours God hath used to inform and edifie me. *Mr. Pemble upon Faith and Grace*, was a book I took much pleasure in, as that which made things clear to me, which I formerly understood little of. I understood the better what was written by

D 3

him,

him, because I had experienced the truth of his Notions. So much for freedom of will.

As to Perseverance, which is another truth much opposed, I have establishment in it from *Jobn 10. 28.* And I give unto them eternal Life, and they shall never perish; neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. My Father which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Fathers hand. This saying of our Lord, preserves me from being infected with that carnal, rotten, racking Opinion, that a true justified person may fall from that state, and that Christ and Satan change members daily.

I proceed to the last stage of my travels, about which I intend any farther discourse, and that was *Whitehall*; for thither the hand of providence led me; and in a short time after I came thither, I met with a change of my condition, from single to married. The dealings of God with me in this place and state, were too remarkable to be past over in silence.

New relations call for new duties; new duties require new graces, and are, as I said before, attended with new tryals: for  
and                      C                      sin

fin sticking close to the whole man, endeavours to promote it self by every occurrence in this world.

The sorrows and bitterness that every enjoyment in this life is attended with, derives its Original from sin. And although the comforts I met with in Marriage, were many, and such as that state affords to few, in sundry particulars, yet I found vanity enough in it also, teaching me to say, Arise, and go hence, for this is not thy rest: Yet in all my straits, still he was near that helped me: and how bad soever my naughty heart behaved it self, yet he that for his own sake loveth, and saveth, did deliver me.

God gave me to find favour in the eyes of the Governours, and chief Persons in that Court, and generally I did not observe any to be an enemy to me, at first, till some began to despise, and hate me partly for my Profession, and partly out of some little envy, which those places abound with. Now, for a persons of my years and interest, not to begin a building of worldly happiness upon such a foundation, is very unusual: For my part I am willing to take to my self the shame of confessing, that I fell into this snare; only through Mercy

it held me not long : the Lord soon shewing me experimentally , that *Men of high degree are a ly*; and shewing me good reason , why he commanded me to cease from them.

To relate the particular Tryals that here I met with, would argue my memory over tenacious of such things , and appear uncomely in other respects. The miscarriages of Professors in this age , is too notorious , and God hath made their sufferings as visible.

To set forth God's dealings with me in those times , is that which I am carrying on. I remember that my approach to Marriage was with great perturbation of mind: for though my affections were deeply engaged in him that God provided for me, and have from thence to this day grown up , and that upon such principles , as will endure when my relation to him , as a wife , shall cease : yet worldly cares did present themselves to me in great multitudes ; the Devil providing instruments to help that business of his forward ; who frequently told me how unhappy I should be , if such things and such things fell out : I dare say the parties sought my good in it intentionally , as Peter did his Masters , when  
he

he prayed him to spare himself : yet was their discourse to me as *Peters* was , tempting to sin. It would be very unhandsome, to enter into the particulars of the things : but in the toss and heat of them all , my heart was up to God for a word of support, who gave it me in the words spoken to *Joshua*, *Chap. 1. vers. 5.* repaired by the Apostle , *Heb. 13. 5.* *I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.* Upon my first reflections on this text, I knew not what to make of it , nor understood that it was to my case : but a while after, being in company with a very eminent Divine ( upon what occasion I know not now ) he fell into discourse upon that Scripture, and said, That it was evident from the foregoing verse , that that Promise was by the Apostle mainly intended to arm people against those worldly cares , that attend a married life. His words brought me to remembrance , how it had been by the immediate Voice of God , whispered to me when I was exercised with those kind of distractions ; and I was surprized with such sudden comfort from it, that ( though I said nothing, my very looks discovered it to the party ) who enquiring of me , found the relation of it, which now I make. At another  
time

time, being under the fear of many dangers; which I foresaw I was like to meet with, I was relieved by reading *Isa. 48. 17. Thus saith the Lord, thy Redemer, the holy One of Israel, I am the Lord thy God, which teacheth thee to profit; which leadeth thee by the way which thou shouldst go.*

Hence God confirmed me in the belief of his continued care over me in my wilderness-walk, and removed in some measure my tormenting fears. At another time, having fallen under some afflicting providence, but what it was I have forgotten, God directed me to look into the cause of it from *Isa. 48. 18. O that thou hadst hearkened to my Commandments, then had thy peace been as a River, and thy righteousness as the Waves of the Sea.* This place was applied by me, as a reproof for my carnal conversation, and that not improperly; for I believe God taught me so to apply it; though I conceive withal, that it was originally uttered as an Expostulation with those who pervert Gospel-Light and Gospel-Duties, turning them into a covenant of works, as the *Jews* then did, and as many nominal Christians now do; thereby forsaking a Spring of living Water, for a cracked vessel, or dirty puddle.

At

At another time I was seriously poring upon my self, and turning my thoughts upon the frame of my heart, I observed such emptinels of Grace, such fulnels of Sin, fainting in my spirit, I said within my self, *How can God take the least pleasure in so wretched a Creature?* Then was the saying of David, 2 Sam. 23. 5. brought to remembrance: *Althoug my house be not so with God, yet hath he made with me an everlasting Covenant, ordered in all things, and sure.* Hence I collected, that if Davids happinels, of whom God gives so high a Testimony, depended on an everlasting well-ordered Covenant, as the only basis of it, it became me to lodge mine there also, what ever my personal qualifications were.

The station in which I stood, had at another time occasioned a long slumber to me, wherein I had not my former sense of the working of Grace, nor fellowship with Christ: The vexation that it gave me, kept me from total stupidity; but it continued longer than such his used to do; for I found not that genuine frame of mind, which I had formerly to God and his wayes: Then was I wonderfully broken in upon, from Isa. 54. 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9,

10, 11. especially that which settled me as upon a Mountain, was the tenth verse, where it is said, *For the Mountains shall depart, and the Hills be removed; but my kindness shall not depart from thee, neither shall the Covenant of my Peace be removed, saith the Lord that bath mercy upon thee.* This was so remarkable a passage, as I went to seek a place to pour out tears of joy, issuing from a heart melted with love. If ever I experienced true contrition, and a heart of stone turned into a heart of flesh, it was at this time.

I was at another time, much affected from the consideration of God's familiar dealing with sinning man, in those intimate expressions of love, and alluring invitations, by which he seeks to draw men after him, expressed under such taking objects, *Prov. 8. 17, 18. 19, 20, 21. I love them that love me; and those that seek me early, shall find me. Riches and Honour are with me, yea, durable Riches and Righteousness. My fruit is better than Gold, yea, than much fine Gold; and my revenue, than choise Silver. I lead in the way of righteousness, in the midst of the paths of judgement; that I may cause those that love me, to inherit substance; and I will fill their treasures.*



In a time of darkness and perplexity of heart, by reason of it, I was insulted over by Satan, as if he had obtained now a conquest over me: Then did the Spirit of God suggest these words unto me, *Micah 7. 8. Rejoyce not against me, O mine enemy! though I fall, I shall rise again; when I sit in darkness, the Lord shall be a light unto me.*

Many other comforts, at sundry times, from several Scriptures, were given in, fitted to the temptation that I was at such times under, which I have sinfully forgotten, the Lord pardon me in much mercy: Some I can give the better account of, because I wrote them in a Paper-book, which I have now by me; as *1 John 8. 9. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins.* Here, pardon of sin is annexed to confession of sin: and it is a very comfortable place, when rightly understood, & made use of; for it implies the knowledge of a ransom for sin, and Faith in a redeemer; for by the tenure of the Law, sin is unpardonable: *Cursed (saith it) is every one that continueth not in all things written in the book of the Law, to do them.* Hence no sorrow for sin, turning from sin, crying for pardon of sin, can obtain it without the Mediation of him, who hath made his  
soul

Soul an offering for sin. But the common use that people make if it, who confess sin formally, and resolve to practise it substantially, is an abhorrence to God, and all that have the Image of God stampt on them: *We have done those things, say they, which we ought not to have done; and we have left undone those things, which we ought to have done;* and might add [ we resolve so to do still ] else what means their returning from the solemnity of their Devotions, to Swearing, Drunkenness, Whoredom, and all abominations that lye in the way of their lustful hearts. It hath troubled me sorely, to hear carnal people make the way to Heaven so broad and easie in their discourse, point-blank against what Christ said of it: and it is a concluding argument they know it not. That God is merciful, and Christ dyed for sinners, are precious truths, and of concernment to saln man, none greater: Yet do multitudes encourage themselves from them to live in sin, and thereupon perish, for one who obtains Salvation by them.

I have been often quickned to duty from Heb. 6. 12. *Be not slothful, but followers of those, who through Faith and Patience inherit*

*inherit the Promises.* I found Faith and Patience of absolute necessity in all obedience, whether active or passive: Nor may I omit the encouragement to obedience laid down, *vers.* 17. and 18. of that Chapter, wherein God is willing more abundantly, to shew unto the heirs of the Promise, the immutability of his Counsels, confirmed it by an Oath, that by two immutable things, in which it is not possible for God to lye, they might have strong consolation, who are fled for refuge to the hope set before them. Where I further note a distinguishing character of a sound Believer; he is said here to fly for refuge to the hope set before him: For I do not think, that in time of sore distress under the burthen of sin, any but such as in whom Christ dwels, can fly to him for refuge; though they may have other great accomplishments, such as to be enlightned to taste the Heavenly Gift, to be partakers of the holy Ghost, and taste the good Word of God, and the Powers of the World to come; as is said of some, *vers.* 4. 5. The words also *Heb.* 7. 25. have been of standing support to me: *He is able to save them to the uttermost, that come to God through Him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession.*

on for them. And thus much of the more remarkable things which beset me before the beginning of my long sickness.

About the beginning of *April*, in the year 58. I was taken with a violent cold, which was exceeding common at that time; since when I cannot say, that I have had one healthy day, as before, but distempers have increased upon me, with very troublesome Effects and Symptoms. Under this visitation, I have had great experience of God's gracious dealing with me in my weakness: I had recourse to the words of the Prophet, *Jer. 9. 23, 24. Thus saith the Lord, Let not the strong man glory in his strength, &c. But let him that glorieth, glory in this, that he understandeth, and knoweth me, that I am the Lord; who exercise Loving-kindness, Judgement and Righteousness in the Earth.* Also the saying of the Apostle, *1 Jam. 1. 12. was of great use to me: Blessed is the man that endureth temptation; for when he is tryed, he shall receive the Crown of Life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him.*

While these things past on, finding in my self many signs of approaching mortality, I was very conversant in the more serious thoughts of Eternity; and I oft

was

was thinking with my self, Oh that I had a crevice, in at which to look, that I might see the state of souls departed. Satan (who loses no opportunity) took the hint of these thoughts, because I did sometime utter them, and interposed this suggestion, That there was no such enjoyment of God after death, as men talked on; and to make it good, instanced in those who were raised from the dead, as *Lazarus*, *Dorcas*, and those that arose at the Resurrection of Christ, and went into the City, and appeared to many; none of all which made any report of what they had seen; which no doubt they would have done, if they had been partakers of such happiness as some speak of. My curiosity in this, God reproved in the words spoken to *Job*, Chap. 38. 17. *Have the gates of death been opened unto thee? or, hast thou seen the doors of the shadow of death?* As if he should say, The things thou enquirest after, are secrets, not to be pryed into.

In the beginning of that Chapter, I also read, how God argued *Job*, and in him me, into a conviction of what a poor worm man is, as being unable to search into, or give an account of his wonders, wrought without number: And for my confirma-

tion, in the belief of the happiness of Saints departed, presented to me, *John 14. 1.* Let not your hearts be troubled; ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Fathers House are many Mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you; I go to prepare a place for you; and if I go to prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to myself, that where I am, there ye may be also.

This instructed me, and hinted to me my atheism, and unbelief, as the proper root of such thoughts as I had been tampering with; it thereupon humbled me, and drew me nearer to Christ.

One thing I may not here omit, being a very considerable note for practical direction. Upon a certain day, about this time, the Lord's Supper was to be celebrated by the Church at *Westminster*, into the fellowship of which, I had through great mercy obtained admission. In the morning before I went, I had a great indisposition to go, and would have been glad of any slight hinderance, yet (stirred up by considering *Heb. 10. 25.* For sake not the assembling of your selves together, as the manner of some is) I went; when I came there, Mr. Roe (the Pastor of that Church) was carrying on a discourse, the subject of which

which was, *Sanctified Affections*; in the prosecution of which, before and after that day, he spent much time: That which he spake then, was by the presence of God, much set upon my heart, notwithstanding the dead frame I came thither in. Sermon being ended, I went to the place where the Church met to break Bread, that I might likewise partake of that Institution: There God met me with greater enlargement of heart, in the sense of his rich Grace set forth in that Ordinance, than in my remembrance I ever had before or since: It put me into a deep mourning over a sinful heart, and made me press after a more clear manifestation, of my being at peace with him, by a holy conversation: To this God gave in a promise containing both, *Micah. 7. 19. He will subdue our iniquities, and thou wilt cast all our sins into the depth of the Sea.* To bury sin in the satisfaction made for it, and to subdue it, in respect of the reign of it, are the highest attainments on this side Heaven, where the remains of it will in like manner be removed.

That perfection which some pretend unto, is to common observation an imaginary dream: For while their Conversa-



tions are compared to that rule, the least transgression whereof is sin; their imperfections are so far from being concealed, as indeed they appear to be worse spots, than the spots of God's Children.

These being the most remarkable things which I remember did attend my being at *Whitehal*, I think it my duty to say something of the mind I brought thither, and the change wrought in it there.

My birth and education was from those who had dependance upon the Court of the late King, whose interest was so much woven into his, that in the late miserable Wars they did adhere to him, to the great reducement of their Families, of which I being one, had a deep share of suffering, and was accordingly imbittered against the instruments of it. I came not only out of the Country with this mind, but I brought it into his Family who had been a chief instrument of those great Changes; against whose person (partly upon the former reason, but principally from the stories I had heard of him) I had sufficient prejudice. Now, that I may right him for the wrong I have done him in my thoughts (and it may be in my words too, sometimes) I cannot so comfortably leave the world



world without declaring what I found  
 from him; wherein, if I could sufficiently  
 demonstrate how little I am byassed by  
 carnal worldly motives, & that which I  
 say, would gain the greater acceptance:  
 That many of his actions had, that either  
 for the matter of them, or manner in which,  
 or end to which they were done, as to pro-  
 voke God to pour contempt and suffering  
 upon him and his in the view of the world  
 since his death, and that most justly (for  
 God doth nothing unjustly) is most evi-  
 dent: teaching us to tremble before him  
 alwayes; For *even our God is a consuming  
 fire.* Yet notwithstanding, I should bury  
 the truth in unrighteousness, did I not  
 from many observations, declare that he  
 was (in my opinion) a man of greater Faith  
 and Holiness, than is almost to be found  
 among the sons of men: One, who had  
 the clear understanding of Gospel-truth,  
 and lived in the power of it (the witness  
 of his surprisal in strong temptation excep-  
 ted,) One to whom Christ was dear, and  
 every thing that seemed to have any thing  
 of Christ stamp on it, without distinc-  
 tions of this or that Sect. Whence I have  
 heard knowing men say (and I believe  
 truly) That he was apt to indulge piten-  
 ders

idere to Holiness, in the apparent hurt of  
 his outward interest, was fearful to beat  
 down any thing which God would have  
 stand. And hath been heard to say, That  
 there were few Sects among Christians, in  
 which something of God was not to be  
 found, which must not be destroyed. How  
 some of them did requite him, I doubt  
 not but they have had leisure since to con-  
 sider, or will have time to do hereafter.  
 And as to the Cause which he was so great  
 a patron of, (it was Publick Reformation,  
 which when the means to effect it, is vin-  
 dicated from those just scandals which  
 Professors of Religion have brought upon  
 it, I doubt not more of the resurrection of  
 it, than of mine own at the last day: And  
 when wicked men have finished their  
 transgressions, and filled their measures,  
 they shall receive the reward of them.  
 God will judge me very shortly as to what  
 I say herein, and hath judged some else  
 ready of whom I speak: and will judge  
 this last before another Age be past, and  
 that will not be long: to Him therefore,  
 and his righteous Judgements be ascribed.  
 That which I intended to conclude with  
 is, as to my living as a Presbyterian, and  
 change of my practice in Church matters.  
 The

The form I was bred under, was *Episcopal*; against which I had none other mind, than all persons have against that wherein they are educated; and of the contrary to which they understand nothing. The Society I conversed with at my first coming to *London*, was, *Presbyterians*. That which I closed with after I came to *Westminster*, was *Congregational*, or *Independent*; for so they have of late been distinguished. The frail mind of man being through ignorance mutable, it is no easie thing to attain to stability, nor can it be till Truth fixes it. I think those fall under the deserved character of wavering minded men, who go forward in the wayes of truth, and then return back again; that retreat is dishonourable: For it was not *Pauls* error, to change his practice upon Conversion; though I have heard that the *Turks* charge him with a crime in it, and to be sure the *Jews* did: But with the bewitched *Galatians* to begin in the spirit, and to seek perfection by the works of the Law, is dangerous Apollacy.

To pass from *Episcopacy* to *Presbytery*, thence to *Independency*, and then (for outward advantage) to return back again, (yea, though they went but the first step)

will certainly merit no better name, than *Time-serving*. But not to be too ready in condemning others; that which I have to do, is, to assign the reason of mine own practice: It is little of the Spirit of discerning I pretend to; yet, if I have any of the Spirit of Christ, and hope of eternal Happiness, I must not quit all claim to it: From that little of it which I have, I do profess, I have been acquainted with very Holy Men of all the fore-named different Perswasions, and have not been a little scandalized at the behaviour of some of them towards their dissenting Brethren; who have little practised that Gospel Grace, *Forbearance*, as clearly commanded in the Word as any other dutie. It is no new or strange thing, that there should be found the effects of enmity between the Seed of the Woman, and the seed of the Serpent: But that Christ should be divided, is neither lawful, comfortable nor comely.

And now to the reason why I sat down with *Independants* in spiritual Communion, it was, Because I found them agreeing with the other two in all fundamental Doctrines belonging to Salvation; and (at least as I think) exercising the power of

Of those principles more in practice.

I observed, that in their Doctrine they separated betwixt the precious and the vile, betwixt regenerate and unregenerate, by the same rules and notes of distinction.

Even some Episcopal men did so, as *Usher* and *Reynolds*, with some few more, and the Presbyterians generally went that way: but then in practice they call them *holy*, whom in Doctrine they pronounce *Prophane*, admitting them to those Gospel-institutions, which are the peculiar privileges of the Saints.

And to justify what they do, they fetch precedents from *Corinth*, and other Churches in the Apostles times; nay, they travel further, even to the old Church of the *Jews*, to shew how corrupt a Church may be, and yet retain the essence of a Church; when such a simple woman as I, am apt to think, their time would be better spent in purging out the old leaven, that the body might be a new lump, 1 Cor. 5. 7.

This at an adventure made me cleave to them, in whom I found most of that spirit, which from the beginning of my Conversion

Conversion, had acted and comforted me.

And let it suffice, that I can say no more for my self herein, because I am not able to try hard Arguments, or untie knotty Controversies; plenty of which I am told the differences betwixt them have afforded. Nay, I must confess, I yett understand not what those things are, that give them their different denominations, though I have heard it in debates often; so little impression did it leave upon me.

This only I find, that Episcopacy (in its last restitution) comes attended with such prophaness, as the very sight of it hath made me rejoyce in the hopes of being delivered by death, from beholding those judgements which I fear will fall upon some of my dearest relations, for being too near those things.

And now upon the sad consideration of what is herein written, Oh you my unregenerate unacquaintance (and such of my relations as are in that condition) let me address some Questions.

Tell

*Tell me honestly, what think you of the story ?*

The Narrative I have made of God's dealing with me, I solemnly profess to be in every tittle true, but not by much all that which might have been said ; I have caused it to be written, in that which I account my last sickness, with none other intent, but to give God the glory of his dealing with me, and bring you to happiness the like way.

*Now, can you think that this great work was from Satan ?*

It is true, Satan tempted and troubled me in my childhood, but I was brought to Christ by it.

*Did Satan intend that, think you ?*

And hath Christ in requital of Satan's kindness therein, returned me back as a present to him ?

Judge, I pray you, in your most retired thoughts ; for I appeal to your Consciences from your wild discourses ; wherein out of your natural enmity to Congregation, you call it *Barren*, and to a holy conversation, which gains no better title from you than *Phanaticism*, or (which is worse) *Sedition* and *Rebellion* ; and the



words wherein it is held out, Cant.

I was known to you from my youth, and I appeal to that knowledge yet, without vain glory; Was not my whole carriage as free from offence, as the generality of youth is, if not more free and gaining?

*How comes it then that sin should be made thus burthensome to me, when you seem to bear it so lightly?*

My Soul hath oft mourned for you in secret, God knows; and I was encouraged thereto, because, for some God heard me, and delivered them out of their desperate state.

Original sin hath dreadfully defaced the Principles of Truth, and darkened the Beams of Light, that once were in mans heart; yet not so totally, but that I dare appeal to the remnants of them in you, whether you do not think this that hath been said, is the work of God, bringing home a lost creature, and leading a blind sinner in the straight way to Life, to which your selves are strangers? for to such I speak. knowing assuredly that the generations of the Just, do echo to all that I have said. And that I was raised from the dead by that Power which Christ himself



himself was raised , *Ephes. 1. 19, 20.* and am kept by no less Power to this very day.

And if so, then , as *Daniel* said to *Nebuchadnezzar* , *Let my counsel be accepted of you ; Break off your sins by Repentance ; your unbelief by Faith ; your superstition ignorance and prophaneſs , by Purity , Integrity , and a sound understanding of the Wayes of God, in his Worship.*

You little think how oft I have sought God for you herein ; wherein , if I obtain answer , I shall at length meet you as co-heirs of the Rest purchased by Christ : However the election of God shall stand , and he knoweth who are his.

And let what I have herein declared , remain upon record , as a witness of what God hath done for some , and particularly for me , against those who in despite of all kindes of teaching , whether by word or example, do violently pursue their lusts, to their eternal and most just destruction.